<div align="center">**MEMORANDUM**</div>

To: NA

From: Charlene James, Instructor for The Center for Legal Pedagogy

Date: March 21, 2016

Re: Initiatives for Spring 2016 – Spring 2017

The following are the primary initiatives that the Center for Legal Pedagogy will be pursuing for the upcoming school year. It is important to note that these are not exhaustive of the Center's total involvement in instructional growth, academic support, and assessment. The new initiatives presented in this proposal do not negate or modify existing Center for Legal Pedagogy duties, unless explicitly stated in this report.

I. Initiative 1: Increase Instructional Support

A. Strategic Plan Goals Met:

1. Meets Strategic Plan Goal 2.1b: The Center for Legal Pedagogy, Curriculum Committee, and Office of Assessment will continue to collaborate to map curriculum to ensure core competencies are intentionally taught throughout the three years of law school.

2. Meets Strategic Plan Goal 6.6a: At the beginning of each academic year the Office of The Dean will prepare a proposal to the faculty of a technology plan that identifies the hardware, software, and training for that year.

3. Meets Strategic Plan Goal 6.7a: The Office of the Dean will annually prepare, at the beginning of the academic year, a proposal to the faculty, on current trends and best practices for use of online courses in legal education.

4. Meets Strategic Plan Goal 6.4a: …Prepare a curriculum map that identifies places in the curriculum where institutional outcomes are being taught and identifies gaps in the curriculum. This overlaps Goal 2.1b above.

5. Meets Strategic Plan Goal 6.5a: The Office of The Dean, in partnership with the Faculty Scholarship and Development Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Center for Legal Pedagogy, will explore instituting peer teaching evaluations to foster teaching excellence.

B. Proposed Projects:

1. Instructional Technology Training and Instructional Forums

Proposed Costs: Some in-person workshops may require lunch to promote attendance, other than that I require no additional monies for actual production and curating of the materials.

The faculty support initiatives pertinent to instructional support need to be expanded. According to the final report of the previous instructor, faculty support focused on lesson planning from a "101" standpoint (teaching basics: rubrics, assessment, lesson planning, etc.), with nods to more

general areas-of-need like developing critical thinking, new instructional technologies, experiential learning, millennial learning, etc.

A. The CLP will increase access to general resources for faculty members, including but not limited to: instructional tools & resources, articles, and other opportunities to increase their knowledge base. This wider array of resources for faculty will fall into the following categories:

1. Instructional Design & Strategy
2. Improving Professional Self-Efficacy through Lesson Planning
3. Understanding & Leveraging the Student Mind-set to Meet Instructional Goals

Most importantly, each resource will be built to meet our core competencies. Faculty members will know when reviewing a resource what competency it meets because it will be clearly marked.

B. Due to limited face-to-face time with faculty, the Center for Legal Pedagogy will provide quality and easy-to-use mediums through which to disseminate the above resources and information:

1. Electronic Newsletter
2. Database of instructional workshops
3. In-person instructional forums based on availability
4. Faculty Resource (Intranet) Site

2. Faculty Resource (Intranet) Site

Proposed Costs: $217.90 + Taxes/ Year (Full budget included in Dean's proposal)

The Faculty Resource website will meet two goals under the new strategic plan for Thurgood Marshall School of Law. These goals are to (a) substantially enhance student-learning experiences, and to (b) maintain a faculty of superior teachers who meet the demands of a learning-intensive student body. Both of these goals demand that faculty understand what the student's learning needs are, and have a wide array of purposeful resources at their disposal designed to meet TMSL core competencies. An interactive website captures faculty attention, allows them the freedom to use digital resources at their discretion, and supports collegiality in a shared space for TMSL faculty and The Center for Learning Pedagogy to discuss strategies for effective learning in the Law classroom.

A. The Connection Between the Faculty Resource Website and Our Strategic Plan:

1. Strategic Plan Goal 2.1b: The Center for Legal Pedagogy, Curriculum Committee, and Office of Assessment will continue to map curriculum to ensure core competencies are intentionally taught throughout the three years of law school.

Website connection: This website is a vehicle through which faculty can be given instructional support in areas of the curriculum that are weak in ensuring core competencies are being met. It is also a vehicle that can be used to assess faculty members in non-cumbersome ways.

2. Strategic Plan Goal 6.6a: At the beginning of each academic year the Office of The Dean will prepare a proposal to the faculty of a technology plan that identifies the hardware, software, and training for that year.

Website Connection: This proposal, once approved, can have real estate on the website to ensure faculty access. I would suggest that the CLP build simple, easy to -use training materials, if necessary, to be posted alongside this proposal.

3. Strategic Plan Goal 6.7a: The Office of The Dean will annually prepare, at the beginning of the academic year, a proposal to the faculty on current trends and best practices for use of online courses in legal education.

Website Connection: The Dean's proposal should be an outline for what resources faculty members need to have access to through their website portal. The Deans proposal communicates what these best practices are, and the Center for Legal Pedagogy will have electronic multi-modal resources available to meet these needs.

B. Faculty Needs Met Through Proposed Faculty Resource Site:

Faculty Need #1: A user-friendly one-stop shop with access to everything The Center for Legal Pedagogy has to offer. This portal is a reminder to TMSL faculty, and the greater community, that excellence in teaching and instruction is a continued TMSL priority. The average law school does not have dedicated, interactive, and easily accessible web-space solely for multi-modal teaching resources.

TMSL has above average faculty, and now they'll have one of the states few interactive faculty e-sites for Law Faculty.

Faculty Need #2: Access to relevant resources. Access and availability are terms often used interchangeably. However, although TMSL faculty may have available to them a plethora of resources through the Law Library, Internet, and Texas Southern University's Inter-library loan program, this does not imply accessibility. Due to the time consuming rigors of searching online databases, requesting access to library loans, and most importantly, not always understanding what instructional concept one is looking for, all pose threats to TMSL faculty's accessibility to resources.

A resource site that connects faculty to pertinent & purposeful resources that have been created with the TMSL student competencies in mind is necessary. Faculty members should have access to high quality information delivered in a format that recognizes class preparation time shouldn't be mitigated by cumbersome instructional support.

This curated website crafts the instructional research experience keeping in mind faculty time, student needs, and the undergirding core competencies that should be intentionally taught throughout law school.

Faculty Need #3: Access to instructional design & strategy at the push of a button. The strategies and tools that the CLP promotes should be made accessible to faculty in a real way. As an instructional designer I know that building out a lesson, creating an experiential lesson plan, developing engaging in-class tools, and more, are time intensive. Faculty now has an instructional designer in-house

who can do these things for them. This Dropbox tool allows faculty to easily upload the document, or related documents, that they need help with.

Faculty Need #4: Archived information that is easily accessible. The Center for Legal Pedagogy, since inception, has consistently communicated important information to faculty members through resources in-line with TMSL student competencies. These archives should be easily accessible and formatted specifically for faculty attentions.

C. Site Features:

1. Lesson Plan/Syllabus Dropbox: Hands-on lesson designing & strategy for Faculty members, designing instructional strategies to meet classroom needs, and developing assistive tools to see those strategies through, will be facilitated through an online Dropbox. Faculty can deposit their lessons in the Dropbox for the following purposes:

a. Creation of instructional tools to accompany a lesson.

b. A face-to-face strategy session on how best to teach the lesson to incorporate specific goals the professor has in mind.

c. Feedback on how to best ensure attainment of student learning objectives.

2. Digital Workshops: A section of the website will be dedicated to strategic and instructional training presentations and materials. These will be built in house utilizing our student comprehensives as baselines. These will be recorded in the classrooms as a video workshop.

3. Archives: All of Dr. Palasota's Teaching Tips and Professor Tabo's blogs will be housed on the site as well.

4. Other Training Materials: The site will be a plethora of multi modal training tools:

a. Recorded PPT's

b. Articles

c. Pre-written modules, and more!

3. Content-Specific Curriculum Add-Ons

Proposed Cost: $0

I propose building out content-specific curriculum to be taught within specific subject matters as a supplement to the professor's class. Research shows that opportunities for skill building within the framework of existing content increases student ability to apply the skills accurately. In an effort to increase this practice-based learning while supporting the professor's instruction, these add-ons may concentrate on legal writing, grammar, or Critical Thinking. The faculty will decide on them.

They are designed to be taught within a 45-minute class as a part of the instructor's lecture. They will be built with input from instructors based on what course categories would most benefit from these types of add-ons (i.e. Civil Procedure, Contracts, Property, Torts, Lawyering

Processes, Business Associations, etc.), and approval from faculty after activities have been designed. Once complete this library of "Add On's" will always be available to faculty members.

<u>4. Peer Teaching Evaluation Program</u>

Proposed Costs: Not enough information to say

I propose utilizing a mixed-method study to (a) increase faculty excellence through peer-to-peer feedback, and (b) give faculty an opportunity to share teaching & learning best practices with each other in a supportive academic environment that increases synergy.

This can be very beneficial to faculty depending on how it is framed and communicated. Buy-in is essential. This initiative will be pursued and planned hand-in-hand with the Department of Assessment.

<u>5. Professional Identity Modules</u>

Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers shares that one of the most important things that a students learns in Law School is there professional identity. It is one of only two classes required by the ABA, but I would argue that just one class in Professional Identity is not enough. Opportunities for purposeful conversations with our students should permeate their experience. Law schools in general are failing to motivate students to ask or answer these questions for themselves (Alexander, 2011). The Center for Legal Pedagogy can make it feasible to do this through creating modules that can be taught by request of professors or as stand-alone workshops. I also would support the opportunity to work with the professor who teaches our professional identity course. This is the type of class that might need to be updated yearly depending on what is happening in the field of law socially and professionally.

II. Initiative 2: Increase Quality of Pre-Law Student Orientation(s)

Please note that these are in addition to the role the Center for Legal Pedagogy already plays in orientation.

A. Strategic Plan Goals Met:

    1. Strategic Plan Goal 2.2a: The Office of Assessment and the Center for Legal Pedagogy collect and report diagnostic data on entering students during orientation.

    2. Strategic Plan Goal 2.2b: The Office of Assessment, in collaboration with the Center for Legal Pedagogy and faculty, investigates and adopts testing protocols that support our goal of monitoring and evaluating student learning outcomes.

    3. Strategic Plan Goal 2.3d: The Center for Legal Pedagogy and Office of Assessment will explore the creation of student profiles to track – for each student in each entering class – the points at which they received intentional instruction and the experiences designed to foster professional legal identity.

B. Proposed Projects:

<u>1.Prep for Law [Boot camp] Restructure:</u>

Proposed Cost: Not enough information to say. Depends on which platform we choose for this year's program.

This is currently an online crash course set up through blackboard. I would like to overhaul this program and build online training modules that are less dense, and more interactive. I also suggest that this course be hybrid (both in person and online). If it stays online, switching the platform is necessary to increase engagement.

The previous instructor utilized Wordpress for students to build online portfolios. Wordpress is great, but requires more of a learning curve, especially with no in-class support. This would be alleviated if the course were hybrid, or there was some type of interactive component.

I would like to clarify the objectives and purpose for the Prep for Law Program, after which I can build a purposeful and clear outline for the 2016 course. However, I am a proponent of a more boot camp style crash course orientation that mirrors what the student experience will be like once school starts.

2. Infusing Professional Identity & Branding into Orientation

Proposed Cost: $0

Building a professional brand starts on day one. A professional school is charged with building skills, as well as fostering a sense of what it means to be person in that profession. Instituting some source of professional identity from the moment students step on campus is important to affect the following:

> a) Fostering ownership of their law school experience, "i.e. putting them in the drivers seat" as a law student.
> b) Making a connection between what it means to be a successful and ethical law student, and a successful and ethical lawyer.
> c) A cause-and-effect framework (again reiterating the connection between what type of student they are and what type of attorney they will be).
> d) Introduce them to ethical responsibility and professional identity.

Building a foundation of professional identity that can be reinforced and supported throughout their student career is important. It is a pool of knowledge that can be used to motivate and re-direct students if they are off track.

Professional identity has to be fostered in some way outside of what they're getting in class so that they can fully understand that from now on they will be the person that someone's life or death, incarceration or freedom, access to a child or evoked access to a child, rests upon.

I view this occurring as a morning session that all students have to attend before they go to their respective workshops. This morning session would frame the rest of their day at orientation. I would separate content into four 35 to 40 minute. Below are the proposed session titles:

> a) What it Means to Be a Student of Law: A Candid Discussion About your Academic and Professional Responsibilities
> b) Ethical Responsibilities to Your Future Clients
> c) Leveraging Your Biggest Asset: Cooperative Learning & Studying. *This will be framed in a discussion of one lone lawyer as opposed to being a part of a team to teach how they can use their sections to their academic and professional benefit.*
> d) A Different Type of Student: Discussing Professor vs. Student Responsibilities

Dean Mouton has approved these modules as a 9am morning session that will be integrated into our current orientation program.

This allows the tension between being ethical and unethical behavior to be consistently reified throughout their experience.

<u>Source:</u>

Alexander, C. (2011). Learning to be Lawyers: Professional Identity and the Law School Curriculum. *70 Maryland Law Review*, *2*, p. 1- 10.